
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District:	Capitol Hill Historic District	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	523 8th Street, SE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	March 23, 2017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	17-246	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Gabriela Gutowski	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Owner 523 8th St LLC, with drawings prepared by Architect Gayll Worsley, seeks concept review for a roof and rear addition in the Capitol Hill Historic District.

Property Description

523 8th Street, SE is located mid-block between E Street and G Street, SE. It is a two-story commercial building built in 1972. The building's construction date falls outside the period of significance for the Capitol Hill Historic District, and therefore it is considered noncontributing. The primary façade is clad in brick and features three six-over-six double-hung windows at the second floor and a storefront with operable doors at the ground floor.

The building directly south (525), also two stories tall, is taller than 523 due to a pedimented roof. The property to the north (521) is one-story in height. A portion of 523's brick clad north elevation can be seen above 521 from 8th Street.

Corrugated metal currently clads the rear elevation. There is a one-story rear extension at the first floor with numerous mechanical units and flues at the roof. The rear elevation cannot be seen from the street. The alley abuts a church and provides parking places and access to the church's below grade parking lot.

Proposal

The plans call for the construction of a full-width three-story tall rear addition extending approximately 17' 0" to the rear property line. The rear elevation would align with the other buildings within the block with the exception of 525, which it would extend past. The elevation would be clad in brick and features banked single-light windows at the second and third floors and a single-leaf door at the ground floor. The proposed rear addition would be visible when looking south down the alley.

The plans also call for the construction of a one-story rooftop addition constructed of metal and glass panels with a retractable roof. The addition would be set back significantly from the primary elevation and measure 12'0" in height. A walk in refrigerator would be located at the front portion of the addition and would be clad in brick. An HVAC unit would be installed at the

rear of the rooftop addition's roof. The rooftop addition would not be visible when looking directly towards the primary elevation from 8th Street. The rooftop addition would be visible from 8th Street at an oblique angle looking southwest.

Evaluation

The alley behind the building is eroded on the west side as a result of a large modern church, a parking lot entrance ramp, and a parking lot located behind an apartment building. Therefore, constructing a three-story rear addition to the rear property line will not have a negative effect on the alley-scape. The new rear elevation will be visible from E Street at the entrance to the ally looking directly south; however it will align with the majority of the buildings within the block. The use of brick and simply designed fenestration is typical to rear elevations at commercial buildings within the block and along 8th Street.

The rooftop addition will be minimally visible from 8th Street over the building's northern elevation. There a number of small scale commercial buildings along 8th Street and it is not uncommon to see objects project above rooflines, such as railings, mechanical units, ducts, flues and bulkheads. The mass of the addition would be set back significantly from the front of the building and the use of steel and glass will clearly identify the rooftop structure as secondary to the building.

HPO conducted a flag test with the applicant to confirm the visibility of the addition. However, the HVAC equipment at the roof of the addition was not mocked up as part of the test. Every precaution should be made to ensure that the HVAC unit at the roof of the addition not be seen for 8th Street or any other surrounding streets.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept to be compatible with the character of the historic district and delegate final approval to staff with the condition that the applicant study the location of the HVAC unit to ensure that it not be visible from any streets prior to construction.